SHENSTONE-GREEN;

OR, THE

NEW PARADISE LOST.

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BEING

A HISTORY OF HUMAN NATURE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

WRITTEN BY THE PROPRIETOR OF THE GREEN.

THE EDITOR

COURTNEY MELMOTH.

"Had I a Fortune of Eight or Ten Thousand Pounds a Year I would build myself a Neighbourhood."

SHENSTONE.

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PILKINGTON-GREEN;

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BY

COURTNEY MELMOTH.

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CHAP. XLV.

OF SHENSTONE-GREEN PLAY-HOUSE, PANTHEON, CONCERT-ROOM AND CORNELYS; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE MASTER OF THE CEREMONIES.

BUT, while theſe little wounds of the heart were curing, there were others of a more dangerous and malignant nature, breeding in the conſtitution of *Shenſtone-Green*.

No ſooner had I given my permiſſion, or, more properly ſpeaking, no ſooner had the ladies drawn from me my "ſlow leave," to eſtabliſh

their projects of amuſement, than the greateſt vigour was employed to diſpatch the execution. By which means, the village was again covered with confuſion. The ardour of the female aſſociation was, indeed, ſo intenſe, that every ſcheme was begun at the ſame time, and, upon going into the *Green*, a few months after the firſt fatal idea was ſtarted, I had the miſery to behold the ſudden growth of evils, very remarkably illuſtrated. A Pantheon, a Play-Houſe, a Concert-Room, a Cornely's, and a Temple for the reception of maſques, were all pretty nearly in the ſame forwardneſs; and publick curioſity was already ſo much attracted, that, *Shenſtone-Green*, was become the gape and ſtare of all the ſurround-

ſurrounding countries. The children of expectation (who are ever upon the catch to ſubſiſt upon the projects of local luxury) came rolling down upon us in torrents; players, fidlers, ſingers, dancers, and every other inſtrument of voluptuous expence, ſpread themſelves over the plain, and anticipated their future ſalary. And, in order to ſubſiſt in the mean time, they ſet the women upon coaxing me out of conſent to their erecting ſeveral temporary booths, to entertain the penſioners, till the more regular buildings ſhould be finiſhed. Accordingly, having put refuſal out of my reach, I ſhook my head, and gave up the point: ſo that all the fooleries of a fair were now every night practiſed

on *Shenſtone-Green.* Poor Seabrooke, grew ſo thoroughly diſguſted with theſe doings, that he ſcarce ever went out of the Manſion-houſe, unleſs, it was to lay upon the graſs-plats in the garden, or ſeek the ſhade of the wood, by a private path: and whenever any body ſpoke on the ſubject, he whiſtled.

I muſt not conceal from the reader, that Mr. Danby took a very active part in this buſineſs; ſince he diſmiſſed the woman, he was a great favourite with the ladies of the *Green.* The mind of that young man was, in truth, ſo turned to expence and magnificence; his natural ſpirits were ſo exceſſive; and his imagination ſo expanded, that every new idea, which

was

was ſet off by gaiety, commanded his whole attention, and drove him to the laſt extremities. Several ſtriking inſtances of this appeared in the courſe of carrying on the new buildings. As the ladies had now unanimouſly choſen him to be maſter of their ceremonies, and director in chief of all their plans; he thought his character at ſtake, in doing juſtice to every thing that had been put under his care. To this end, he flew up from Wales to London, and from London to Paris, and ſo down again to the *Green*, with almoſt incredible rapidity. And preſently after theſe excurſions, we had ſuch waggon and boat-loads full of beautiful *bagatelles*, which, though they coſt the moſt

ſerious ſums of money, did real honour to the taſte of this handſome agent, who had the art of diſſipating ſo very delicately, that every lady proteſted it would be an honour to leave herſelf pennyleſs, rather than damp the ſuperb choice of decorations, which ſo characteriſed their favourite. Can I, dear reader, confeſs to thee without a fatherly bluſh, that even the innocent Matilda was quite captivated with the brilliant extravagance of her accompliſhed Danby. The fact ſeems to be, that women are more eaſily dazzled with the qualities of ſuch men, than they are convinced of their imprudence. The elegant ſpirit of a Mr. Danby, though it brings ruin and deſolation along

along with it, hath I doubt, more charms for the women, than all the punctual preciſions of prudence, or the regulations of œconomy. Matilda ſaw in this youth an excellent heart joined to a moſt amiable form —She ſaw that every action was animated, and every idea grand. He had fought; he had conquered in her cauſe. The very nature of his *rencontre* flattered her ſelf-love. In a word, her object was lovely, and ſhe loved with all her ſoul.

I was, perhaps, the only perſon, except the ſteward (for Seabrooke became a recluſe) who felt particularly the extraordinary conduct of this gentleman. Being neither blind to his virtues nor follies, I beheld

with real anxiety the great mixture of good and bad in his character, and wiſhed it were poſſible to ſeparate them, for unleſs that could be done I ſhuddered at the very thought of truſting him with the guardianſhip of Matilda's happineſs. His preſent habit of profuſion, countenanced, and even courted as he was to indulge it, would have led him to impoveriſh a nation inſtead of a village; and I therefore determined to take ſome ſeaſonable opportunity to remonſtrate with him before it might be too late.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVI.

BEING AS GAY AND GALLANT A CHAPTER AS ANY IN THE BOOK.

SUCH an opportunity as I desired, however, not immediately happening, I was obliged to postpone my intention in regard to Mr. Danby, who, in the mean time, was running the same career, and gathering fame amongst the ladies, in proportion as he squandered their money. I carry you, reader, from hence, into the midst of things, and desire you will conceive the appearance of *Shenstone-Green* no longer under the form of a little

a little circumſcribed village, but under that of a town, enriched by a regular Theatre, a regular Pantheon, a regular Maſquerade, and a regular Muſick-Room. When all theſe were fit for exhibition, Mr. Danby, in the triumph of his labours, which were now drawing to a period, gave a very grand ball and ſupper in the pantheon, by way of celebrating the completion of ſuch a cluſter of magnificent projects. On this occaſion I received a card, which invited Seabrooke, Matilda, and myſelf: but Seabrooke had taken a ſtroll into the country, and told me he ſhould whiſtle and wander for ſome days, ſo that I had no opportunity of even ſhowing him the note, for he had ſet out

out the morning before, obſtinately refuſing all attendance, and taking with him one of the volumes of *Shenſtone*, and his hazle walking-ſtick. Though I promiſed myſelf poor entertainment, Matilda perſuaded me to accept the invitation.

There is no ſplendour of language can *over-deſcribe* the richneſs, nor the delicacy of this banquet, which might very properly have been given by any young monarch on his acceſſion to the throne. You will draw your own inference therefore how far it was conſiſtent with the ſituation of things at *Shenſtone-Green!* The goddeſs of prodigality—if any ſuch there be—ſeemed to have laid her finger on every

every part of the entertainment; and yet Mr. Danby had ſo contrived the matter as to reconcile avarice himſelf to the ſcene, and make it impoſſible to upbraid. The ball was opened by Mr. Danby and Matilda, who danced a minute with ſuch inexpreſſible grace, and ſo much to the joy and amazement of the whole company, that—pray forgive me, reader—I was quite flattered into an obliviion of conſequences, and joined in the pleaſures of the evening as heartily as the reſt. Excluſively indeed of the pride of the parent, exulting at the applauſes which an only child had very innocently acquired; there were many other things to keep up the gaity of the ſeaſon, and

and nurſe that forgetfulneſs, which is ſometimes ſo neceſſary to pleaſure. In about five minutes after my arrival, a noble band of muſick put itſelf in order to play an occaſional *hymn to gratitude*, which was to be ſung by the penſioners, and was the production of Mr. Danby. The turn, the conduct, and the ſentiment of this little compoſition, diſcovered at once the good heart and fine genius of the author, who, while it was performing, came from his chair, and held over my head a radiant canopy, on which were diſplayed the figures of *Benevolence* and *Charity*. Next advanced all the female penſioners, adorned with chaplets of roſes, and ſtrewed the way for the fair Matilda with flowers.

flowers. Scarce was this ceremony over, before the general joy was yet increaſed by the appearance of Mr. Edward Elixir, who came into the room by a private folding door, with the machine of his wife, who ſat therein like the image of plenty, and was drawn round the room twice in ſtate by the apothecary, who laughed, tagged, and capered inceſſantly, till he was obliged to draw off the caravan, and go peaceably home to his bed. But the ſcene which ſucceeded this was of ſuch a nature, and contrived with a grace ſo admirable, that had Mr. Danby ruined the univerſe that very evening, there are few readers who would not pardon it, in con-

conſideration of what is going to be told them.

Matilda and this young gentleman being engaged in the ſame plot, which both had projected, and carried on with the utmoſt ſecrecy, I was not prepared for the ſurprize that I felt, on beholding Hackney Oldblade, dreſſed in a ſea-officer's new uniform, enter the room, between Mr. Henry Hewit on the one hand, and his daughter Fanny, dreſſed in white, on the other. They were no ſooner come in, than Mr. Danby and Matilda walked up, and began a ceremony which they had prepared. Immediately the muſicians exerted their utmoſt ſkill, in doing all poſſible juſtice

to a *nuptial ode*, which Mr. Danby had written, the words of which, were divinely ſung by Matilda. During the ode Mr. Danby ſpread a white banner before Henry Hewit, while Matilda diſplayed another in honour of Fanny. Then the wreaths and garlands were entwined round their heads, and a ſilver label held up to the view, ſparkling with the following inſcription: *The New-married Couple; or, the Celebration of an Union betwixt Honour and Beauty.* While the company were expreſſing their ſurprize at this ſpectacle, in came the reverend Mr. Cuſheon (whoſe frailty is, I truſt, a good natured ſecret, reader, betwixt me and thee). Mr.

Cuſheon

Cuſheon paid his compliments to the new-married folks, whom, it ſeems, he had very lately attended to the altar; and they were then preſented to me by my daughter.

Whatever ugly whiſpers might have gone abroad to poor Fanny's diſadvantage, prior to this circumſtance, they were all effectually done away by this generous manoeuvre, inſomuch, that all the ladies followed the fair example of *Matilda*, and the gentlemen took their pattern from *my* behaviour.

Thus was the deep-wound in the heart of our ſoldier ſuddenly healed up, and the honour of his family totally redeemed.

It is not neceſſary to enquire, whether this reſpect to poor Fanny Oldblade was real or affected on the part of the ladies. We had ſo abſolutely ſhut the lips of detraction, that the power of her opening them again, *maliciouſly*, was taken away; and from that night, this lovely young woman, with honeſt Henry Hewit, lived the happieſt, and perhaps, the *moſt virtuous* pair in the precincts of *Shenſtone-Green.*

The evening concluded with a morſel of eloquence, pronounced by Mr. Danby, on the nature of the diverſions which were then about to commence, and in this diſcourſe (which might have graced the mouth of a member of the *Belles Lettres*, at his being

being admitted into the French academy) our young preſident ſhowed himſelf to be as able a reaſoner, and as perfect an orator as he was before known to be a man of elegance and diſſipation.

At the end of his ſpeech, he adjuſted the times and ſeaſons for opening and ſhutting the places of diverſion, and, in ſhort, fixed every thing on a plan, in which would be offered not only the greateſt variety, but in which, alſo, each amuſement would be crowned with the *eclat* of the company.

By ſuch means Mr. Danby made one of the moſt expenſive evening's pleaſure too *agreeable* to admit the

obtruding idea of what it *caſt*, and, by artfully ornamenting the cauſe, blinded the ſpectator, till it was impoſſible for him to look forward to the effect.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVII.

THE GLORY OF SHENSTONE-GREEN PROMISETH TO FADE AWAY.

THE taliſman, however, which bound up our ſenſes, was broken to pieces the very next morning, and the charm was no more. Stripped of her ſparkling decorations, Folly appeared full in view, and Juſtice (with ſcourges in her hand, and terrour in her eye) purſued her cloſe.

The diſtreſs began with the appearance of Mr. Samuel Sarcaſm, who gave me a freſh packet of papers. Every one was of tremendous length,

and the ſum total threatened with bankruptcy or impriſonment.

Upon a ſtricter ſcrutiny, they appeared to be a bundle of claims, which were made upon certain of the penſioners for work done, and goods furniſhed, to the groſs amount of many thouſand guineas.

But what are theſe to *me*, Samuel ſaid I, laying down the papers?

We will examine firſt the premiſes, and then draw our inference, if your Honour pleaſes, anſwered Samuel.

Here Samuel put on his ſpectacles and read aloud.

The ſecond petition of the female penſioners to their patron, SIR B. BEAUCHAMP.

SHOWETH,

THAT your petitioners do not at all doubt, but the execution of their ſeveral projects (under the ſuperintendance of D. Danby, Eſq;) has been honoured with your warmeſt approbation.

THAT *Shenſtone-Green* is now ſo exceedingly crouded with company (in expectation of the firſt opening of the diverſions) that, it is with the utmoſt difficulty either beds or accommodations of any kind can be found; your petitioners obſerve, moreover, faces and forms moving about of all

ſorts, ſizes, cuts, and countries, which they take to be ſo many proofs of the great popularity the *Green* muſt already be in.

THAT the uncommon *improvements*, made within a few months laſt paſt, are of ſuch a nature, as muſt ſoon give the pattern of perfection to Europe, of which *Shenſtone-Green* will be at once the glory and the ſurprize; in conſequence of which your petitioners, willing to do poetical juſtice in the fulleſt degree, earneſtly recommend an immediate alteration of the *name* of their new *Paradiſe*.

THAT inſtead of *Shenſtone-Green* (which ſeems only to imply a petty piece of ground

ground with a few cottages ſcattering about, and ſome goſlings grazing thereupon) your petitioners humbly propoſe it ſhould aſſume a magnitude of ſound agreeable to the pomp it it has received by the labours of your petitioners. To this end they offer two titles for conſideration—namely, *Shenſtone-City*, or the *City of Shenſtone*.

THAT your petitioners beg leave to take down the figure of the late William Shenſtone, Eſq; from a pedeſtal (which they conceive diſgraces him) in order to replace a ſtatue to his memory, worthy of ſuch an *angel of a man*, and to make the *City* of *Shenſtone*, or *Shenſtone-City*, all of a piece.

THAT

THAT zealous to do every thing which may merit your applauſe, your petitioners intend ordering *their poet* to be caſt in a mould of ſolid ſilver, properly embelliſhed, with the emblem of a large fountain of the ſame metal, running a ſtream of gold at the bottom of his feet, to ſhow his unbounded generoſity. Underneath the fountain we propoſe the following motto, taken (as Mr. Danby ſays) from a contemporary poet:

"Behold, the genial current of his ſoul."

THAT your petitioners humbly beg they may be honoured with *your* image alſo, which, though already engraven upon the tablet of their hearts, they are ambitious of ſeeing publickly exhibited

hibited as a new ornament of their city. They propoſe to have Sir Benjamin Beauchamp, repreſented in the attitude of opening his arms wide to the univerſe, and the following inſcriptions on the front of the pedeſtal:

"Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden."

"See Beauchamp's plan unfolds the ſoul of *Shenſtone*."

THAT filled with the warmeſt gratitude, which can poſſibly affect the human heart, your petitioners are not perfectly contented with the ſimple titles of Sir Benjamin Beauchamp, and William Shenſtone, Eſq; but underſtanding that moſt of the perſons, now canonized, have been *ſainted* for things

things of leſs note than the preſent magnificent circumſtance, they wiſh the pedeſtals to ſignify the following intelligence: For example,

SAINT

SAINT SHENSTONE
The *Sage*,
Who wrote out the fineſt plan for
The fineſt Town in the World.
SAINT BEAUCHAMP
The *Benevolent*,
Who built upon the plan of *Saint Shenſtone*
A whole City,
Which, from a ſmall beginning, aroſe to
be the wonder of the world.
And the whole
By the voluntary Bounty of one Man,
viz.
SAINT BEAUCHAMP.
" Large was his bounty, and his ſoul ſincere."
Theſe Statues
of
Solid Silver,
Erected by thoſe, whom his Liberality
Protected,
In the year of their ſupreme
Felicity——
and of
Our Lord God——

THAT

THAT, laſtly, your petitioners, having now completed their views, do ſubſcribe with all their ſouls to defray the expenſes as much as in them lies, and beg Saint Beauchamp will *advance* (on the penſion of all the females) the ſum of twenty thouſand pounds, to be paid back to Saint B. by inſtallments, allowing to the penſioners in the mean while (by way of annuity) *i. e.* to each perſon, only the neat yearly ſum of—

Here I interrupted Mr. Sarcaſm, by very vehemently exclaiming—Mighty God, man, why this is downright frenzy—frenzy from the beginning to the end—Twenty thouſand pounds quotha?—

Why

Why your *Saintſhip* knoweth, anſwered the ſteward, that—

A truce with your foolery, Mr. Sarcaſm, cried I, again interrupting him, I perceive plainly that too much indulgence hath let looſe upon me all the violent paſſions of human nature. What, Samuel, doſt thou ſuppoſe, or do theſe fooliſh women ſuppoſe, I built me a neighbourhood to bring into it all the vices and luxuries of a large city! No, Samuel, let them be told that I raiſed up the walls of *my* little town to reclaim errour, and protect diſtreſs: to fill the forlorn heart with innocent gladneſs; to conceal the bluſhes of unpremeditated miſtake, and ſcreen from the fury of the world ſuch objects as were

were left defended from its rapacity. Fie upon them! They have *loſt my Paradiſe already*. Tell them ſo from me, Samuel. Tell them they have brought ſin and ſhame into my *Eden*, and deſerve to be driven out like the original offenders.

I will report what your Honour deſireth me, ſaid Samuel, putting his ſpectacles with the moſt provoking *ſang-froid* into their caſe, and then walking off.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVIII.

SOME OF THE FIGURES ON SHENSTONE-GREEN DISAPPEAR.

IT is incredible to conceive the confuſion and the uproar which this angry meſſage produced in the village. Every creditor was up in arms, and Mr. Danby, the unfortunate preſident (who had been the acting member in all the buildings, and their ornaments) was obliged to take refuge in the houſe of Hackney Oldblade, who, with ſword in hand, guarded him from the threats of the clamourous multitude till midnight.

Matilda no ſooner heard of Danby's ſituation, than ſhe fell at my feet, and, (with an energy which could come only from the heart) begged that I would ſacrifice her thouſand pounds a year to a man, whoſe freedom was much dearer to her than fortune, and which, ſhe ſaid, ought to be purchaſed with every thing ſhe had in the world. But, before I had time to anſwer this extravagant effuſion of tenderneſs, a man appeared on horſeback at my door, who preſented a letter to the firſt ſervant he ſaw, and then rode off again at full ſpeed. The epiſtle was without date, and evidently written by a trembling hand.

To Sir BENJAMIN BEAUCHAMP.
At BEAUCHAMP MANSION-HOUSE,
&c. &c.

" SIR,

" THAT I may not ſeem as con-
" temptible as prodigal, I catch up
" a ſorry pen, at an inn on the road,
" to tell you, that I leave *Shenſtone-*
" *Green*, more to ſhun the horrour of
" appearing again under the juſt re-
" proaches of *your* eye, than from
" any event that could take place to
" my own perſonal inconvenience. I
" have offended the *two* only perſons
" whoſe eſteem ought ever to have
" been moſt ſacred—I have offended
" too *myſelf*. I am aſhamed—con-
" vinced, and in deſpair—

" D. DANBY."

Over this letter I hurried my eye and put it into my pocket, to prevent its being diſcovered by my daughter, who was but too much agitated already. I promiſed every thing ſhe wiſhed, and had the good fortune to pacify her ſo far as to dry her tears, and perſuade her to withdraw to her chamber.

Scarce had ſhe retired, when the ſteward came again to the Manſion-Houſe with new burdens of petition and remonſtrance. The examination of theſe I would then have avoided upon almoſt any conditions; but the ſteward ſaid, the ſalvation of *Shenſtone-Green* abſolutely depended on my giving to *every one* the moſt ſerious

ſerious and immediate attention. Sir, ſaid Samuel, your honour can have no conception of the preſent ſtate of your village or that of your villagers, unleſs you will dedicate this whole morning to the full examination of all thoſe parcels now before you.

Alarmed at this intelligence, and ſtill more at the aweful manner by which it was introduced, I ſat down tremblingly to the ſcrutiny.

To particularize the articles contained in this freſh catalogue of follies (which now extended themſelves over the *Green*) would be equally tedious and diſtreſſing. I ſhall, therefore, for the reader's peace of mind, compreſs all the facts together, and offer

him a general idea of the whole, by means of the following abridgements of each addreſs.

FIRST,

Several penſioners complained, that, they had been ill-uſed by their neighbours in points either of fame or fortune, property or character; the conſequence of which was, either, that I muſt openly countenance duels, put the law into every man's hands, with piſtol and poignard, or elſe I muſt eſtabliſh a Court of Juſtice, in which cauſes ſhould be heard and crimes puniſhed.

SECONDLY,

That the ſpirit of private gaming had ariſen to ſo fatal an exceſs in *Shenſtone-Green*, that, moſt of the pen-

penſioners had caught the contagion, and ſome had even mortgaged their annuities to a fellow who purchaſed lives, and enriched himſelf by impoveriſhing others; ſo that all the practiſes of Change alley had travelled down to *Shenſtone-Green*.

THIRDLY,

Bailiffs and their attendants were buſy in every quarter of *Shenſtone-Green*, to ſerve their ſpecial originals and their running writs upon the bodies of inſolvent penſioners; ſo that officers of juſtice picked a very pretty fortune out of the pockets of the *Shenſtonians*.

FOURTHLY,

Executions were laid on ſeveral houſes by ſome, who imagined furni-

ture might ſupply the want of ready money.

FIFTHLY,

The actors, fiddlers, &c. finding their hopes thus blaſted all at once, walked over the *Green*, in a ſolitary manner, and at length took themſelves away, very heartily curſing Sir Benjamin Beauchamp, and William Shenſtone, Eſq. as two ſilly fellows, whom they thought to be utterly ignorant in the ways of the world, and who had vainly attempted to ſubvert civil government, by realizing a parcel of incoherent chimeras too ridiculous even for blank verſe, or ten ſyllable rhyme. *Shenſtone-Green* was looked on, by the gentry, as the greateſt farce that ever was acted and——DAMN'D.

SIXTHLY,

SIXTHLY.

One of the penſioners; to wit—Alexander Spur, Eſq; having ſold his annuity and ſpent all the profits, very naturally rode his own horſe *Shenſtone*, on the Welch road, where, by very uncommon chance, he met a rich perſon, of whom he borrowed two hundred and ten pounds rather againſt the rich perſon's will, which occaſioned his being purſued and overtaken juſt as he was putting poor *Shenſtone* into the ſtable: ſo it was very ſoon expected, that, on this ſweet *Paradiſe* of a *Green*, a gallows would be erected for the uſe, firſt of Mr. Alexander Spur, and then for the other penſioners as occaſion offered.

SEVENTHLY.

SEVENTHLY.

The ladies of pleaſure (who formerly had the too great honour to aſſociate with the lovely Fanny Oldblade, now Mrs. Hewit) finding everything in *their way* gone to wrack and ruin, had returned to London to their ſeveral Padding-places in the moſt notorious parts of that city, where they entertain all their friends with the merry and mournful *Hiſtory of Shenſtone-Green*; a ſcheme, which did not *take*.

EIGHTLY.

Several petitions appeared very regularly drawn out by an attorney, who, it ſeems, found his preſence more neceſſary at *Shenſtone-Green* than in Chancery-lane. Amongſt other things

things appeared the following propoſals:

For converting the Pantheon into a court of Equity.

—The Concert Room into a Court of Conſcience.

—The Maſquerade-Hall, into Dr. Commons, and—The Theatre into a Court of King's-Bench.

From the above account it appeared ſo evidently, my whole project was a mere caſtle in the air that I was quite diſpiritcd. Then there is not a folly of *any kind*, Samuel, ſaid I, which does not at this time flouriſh upon *Shenſtone-Green*. Pray, Samuel, what is

is your opinion of all theſe fine doings?

That it is the Hiſtory of poor *Human Nature* ſpoiled by *human art*, when both are left at large to their own inventions, an't pleaſe your Honour, ſaid the ſteward.

But my village, Mr. Sarcaſm, is ten times worſe than any other ſpot in Chriſtendom.

Becauſe, an't pleaſe your Honour, every other ſpot in Chriſtendom but your village, is regulated by laws penal; whereas, *Shenſtone-Green* is builded and conducted wholly upon a *poetical model.* Your's, ſir, is fairy land; *we are* obliged to go to the next town for juſtice.

Here the ſudden entrance of one of the penſioners (who delivered me a petition on his knee with a grave air, and then withdrew) put a ſtop to the ſteward's obſervations.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIX.

AN ACADEMY OF DISPUTE IS ESTABLISHED ON SHENSTONE-GREEN.

THE petition now brought was, in effect, to the follow purpoſe, viz.

THAT a ſociety of penſioners accuſtomed to publick diſputation, and to ſpeak their ſentiments on important ſubjects, found themſelves ſo incapable of reliſhing the *frivolity* and froth of thoſe other penſioners (who were attracted only by gewgaw and glitter) that they found the time inſufferably long upon *Shenſtone-Green.*

THAT

THAT in order to compenſate for this dearth of intellectual entertainment, they propoſed (with my permiſſion) to inſtitute an *Academy of Diſpute*, where ſcience and the *belles lettres*, and morality, were to be debated, encouraged, and cultivated.

THAT no expence whatever ſhould attend the proſecution of this project, except that of fitting up a few benches or forms for the audience, and a roſtrum for the preſident, who was, of courſe, to be Sir Benjamin Beauchamp.

This matter ſeemed to me, in compariſon with others, which had been received, ſo exceedingly innocent and rational, that I wrote a *grant* without heſita-

hesitation, and ordered the steward himself to deliver it to the learned body of my pensioners, with the best respects of their patron.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

THE WHISTLER EXALTS HIS VOICE IN THIS CHAPTER.

THE ſteward had ſcarcely ſtepped over the threſhold, when my old and excellent friend Mr. Seabrooke (beſprent with duſt, and burniſhed by the tan of that ſun, upon which he ſo much doated) made his appearance.

I ran to him with that ardour, which denotes an affection founded upon a long experience of admirable qualities—qualities which his inno-

cent oddities ſerved only to render the more endearing.

He ſhook me heartily by the hand, and then whiſtled his loudeſt note to ſummon Matilda, who, however, was indiſpoſed in her chamber; ſhe was indeed, too ill to ſtir from her apartment; ſo, without any more ceremony, Seabrooke took two or three ſtrides up the ſtairs, and was ſoon dandling his little favourite in his arms, and aſking all the tender queſtions that could poſſibly come from a man of his tenderneſs.

But Matilda came and aſked me ſoftly, if Mr. Danby was at liberty?

I ſaid

I ſaid (in the ſame under-tone of voice) that, he *was:* upon which the poor girl caught ſuch ſpirits, that ſhe ran to Seabrooke, and chided him for his cruel excurſion, at a time too, ſaid ſhe, when I wanted my old play-fellow more than ever I did in my life; and ſuch ſunny weather too!

Then let us have all our different adventures, ſince parting, related over a diſh of good tea, ſaid Seabrooke. *Whew*—quick—*Whew*—

In the bow-window if you pleaſe, papa, which looks towards *Shenſtone-Green*; becauſe then, you know, if any perſon ſhould happen to come, we ſhall all be ready to receive him, and fetch a cup in a moment.

The idea of Danby's freedom, had ſo well recovered her, that ſhe tripped down ſtairs as agil as a hare, and the tea-equipage was prepared without delay.

I took the lead in the preſent converſation, and circumſtantially related (without any other reſerve than that of concealing Mr. Danby's name) every tranſaction that had paſſed ſince, Mr. Seabrooke ſet off on his ramble.

At the cloſe of this lamentable account, Seabrooke gave a long whiſtle, and ſaid, with an emphaſis highly marked that, he was now convinced of what he had before ſuſpected. *Whew*—ſaid he,—'tis now clear: 'tis abſolute ſunſhine.

I de-

I desired the assistance of his friendship, showing, very pathetically (by a fear which then flowed from my heart to his hand, that I was as deeply *affected* as *deceived*).

Matilda ran softly on the opposite side to kiss my cheek, and Mr. Seabrooke addressed me thus:

Sir Benjamin Beauchamp, you are, I find, a man to be *looked at*, but not *followed*. As soon as I heard of your project, I came to see how human nature would behave, under the execution of such a whim. In Glamorganshire (said I to myself, upon reading your plan) resides a man whom I would travel seven times seven over the Alps, in the dead of winter to

know: his heart muſt be the nobleſt in the world. Accordingly, I travelled on foot to *Shenſtone-Green*, where, I found your diſpoſition even greater than I imagined, and I reſolved to paſs ſome time with you in *Paradiſe*. But a very few days elapſed before I was obliged to ſtretch myſelf on the graſs-plats in the eye of the ſun, that I might not ſee too much of my fellow-creatures. I every hour remarked that *modern man*, without the rod often ſhaken over his head, and the whip ſmacked in his ear, was as an horſe of ſpirit without any bridle. The poor animals whom—to carry on the alluſion—you had taken from the barren heath (where they were ſtarving upon thiſtles) to place, of a ſudden,

ſudden, in the luxuriant paſture, where the corn and graſs came mantling to their cheſts—were turned too rapidly looſe to become ſteady. They firſt grew fat, then indolent, next reſtive, and laſt *vicious*. I heard them ſnort diſdain; and I ſaw them lift the hoof againſt the very benefactor, who put on their ſhoes, and gave the vigour to kick. Yet I pitied rather than blamed: I conſidered whether this was pure baſeneſs, or the inevitable conſequence of ſituation, operating on peculiar temperament and character. —*Too happy* creatures ſaid I, *are* theſe ſteeds of Sir Benjamin Beauchamp; for which reaſon they muſt *ſoon* be *too miſerable*.

Had they been timely broken to the bit, and taught an early obedience to the curb: had they been put into proper training, there is no motive to ſuppoſe they would not have been moſt of them ſerviceable animals.

—and—

Does nothing then but rigid diſcipline create virtue, ſaid I, Mr. Seabrooke?

No, replied Seabrooke, diſcipline hath no influence over Henry Hewit, Hackney Oldblade, Matilda Beauchamp, nor ſome other perſons of our acquaintance. Good and gentle characters, require no other impulſe to virtue than the dictate of the heart, which is their unerring rule of right; but

but the majority, being neither gentle nor good; it is neceſſary to prevent the force of bad habit or bad nature, by the interpoſition of wholeſome laws. But in *Shenſtone-Green*, none of theſe could be eſtabliſhed conſiſtently with the proprietor's *delicacy*.

You have *ſeen*, you have *felt* the conſequence, Sir Benjamin.

I ſighed bitterly in echo to a ſigh from Matilda, and then, Mr. Seabrooke continued.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

IN WHICH THE WHISLER'S PIPE IS PARTICULARLY IN TUNE.

HURT, and diſguſted with ſeeing how impoſſible it is to leave human beings to their own diſcretion, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, and really concerned ſo early to perceive, the abſolute madneſs of eſtabliſhing a ſyſtem of pure obligation and benevolence on the one hand, and of gratitude on the other, I wanted yet to try, if there was no way for a man to be liberal without doing at the ſame time

time as much harm as good. Two or three days did I contemplate this ſubject, as I lay in the ſun upon your graſs-plats, my friend; and, at length, an idea came acroſs, which ſet me upon my legs to ſome purpoſe: for, I have meaſured near ſixty miles, in my ſauntering way, Sir Benjamin, ſince I left the Manſion-houſe, and now I am returned thoroughly ſatisfied, that I can *oppoſe* our friend *Shenſtone* in every part of his ſcheme. Nay I am, at this time, able to ſet one of his obſervations againſt another. Pray compare *that* notion of his from whence you took your hint, and which was, indeed, the foundation of the village, with what follows:

"I have

"I have been formerly ſo ſilly as "to hope (ſays our poet in one of "his egotiſms) that every ſervant I "had might be made a friend; I am "now convinced, that the nature of "ſervitude bears a *contrary* tendency. "It is the nature of ſervitude alſo, to "diſcard all *generous* motives to obe- "dience; and to point out no other, "than thoſe ſcoundrel ones of intereſt "and fear."

Now, take my word for it, continued, Mr. Seabrooke, that, all penſions upon the *Shenſtone* principle, are *too generouſly* and *too largely* beſtowed, not to reduce the perſon thereby benefitted to a ſtate of ſlavery and *obligation*, which (unleſs ſuch perſon happens

happens to have the heart of a Henry Hewit) muſt, of neceſſity, introduce idleneſs, which will beget voluptuouſneſs, which will terminate in vice.

Had we been convinced of theſe facts ſome time ago, Mr. Seabrooke, ſaid I, how many pangs of heart, as well as purſes of ſolid gold might have been ſpared.

I was not clear in the point myſelf, anſwered Seabrooke, till I had more particularly proved it in my late excurſion; of which I will now give *you* and Matilda an account. He pauſed, and then went on.

As I graſped my hazle-ſtick on the morning of my departure, ſurely, ſaid I, it

I, it is poſſible for a man to be at once wiſe and generous. Let us ſee. To this purpoſe, I bent my way over the mountains, reſolved to ſtop at every hut or hamlet that ſhould riſe up in the road. My ſcheme was to do what, I fear, the *Shenſtonian* plan does not permit—namely, to try the worth of my object *before* I adminiſtred relief. Pigmy as I am, I ſtood upon the galled ſhoulders of that giant of generoſity, Sir Benjamin, and ſo ſaw farther. To forward this my ſtratagem, I tore off a corner of my hat, as you ſee, to make myſelf look properly miſerable; I cut a couple of ſlits in my ſhoes, picked a few holes in the moſt obvious parts of my coat,

taking care that the buttons ſhould, in ſeveral places be wanting—becauſe there is nothing more denotes penury, than the diſappearance of a button, particularly, if the old threads are ſuffered to hang about—and ſhaking the powder out of my wig (which you know has not been acquainted with combs, ſince I came into your poetical country) ſallied into the pooreſt part of Wales, under pretence of being the pooreſt fellow in it. Thus accoutered, I entered every cottage, whoſe mud walls were either bleaching on the hills, or ſkulking amongſt the vallies. I knocked without ceremony at every door, and often let myſelf in by means of a latch. Without the leaſt ceremony I took a chair,

chair, or (if chairs were ſcarce) a ſtool, and ſet myſelf down with the family. If they were at dinner, I dined alſo; if they were at work, I joined in the buſtle, and would take mop or broom out of the damſel's hand without ſaying a ſyllable. You know, Matilda, what a proud odd ſort of ſaucy beggar I am. It will be impoſſible to tell you half the ſingular events, which trod upon the heel of this ſingular conduct.—Some thought I was mad, others merry. Some believed I was a conjurer, others an impoſtor. What of that, I had my plan before me, and I purſued it without deviation. Whether I was well or ill treated, I ſtayed always long enough to find out the hiſtory

of the hut; its misfortunes, its proſperities. Hence, the characters of the preſent poſſeſſors were developed of courſe. Sometimes I have entered a wretched-looked cottage (where penury ſeemed to ſit ſtaring in a uſeleſs chimney-corner without a faggot to call the blood into her fingers) and I have, on enquiry, found, the inhabitants ſo rich in content, that I dared not venture to leave with them more than half a crown or at moſt five ſhillings, for fear I ſhould overwhelm them with ſudden independence, and ſo ruin the family. Had I left a whole guinea in ſuch a hut, the proſperity would have been ſo great, that four girls who were then ſinging at their wheels, would not

have returned to ſpinning till idleneſs and diſſipation had made them almoſt forget how to wind the wool round their lazy fingers. At other times I have gone into a houſe, where, by the diligence of the cottagers, all ſorts of penury ſeemed to be baniſhed; where the floor was nicely ſanded, the pewter ſhone like mirrours, and the goodly rows of crockery, mended at top and bottom, garniſhed the chimney-piece; and yet, before I took my leave, I have found the family ſo *truly* poor, and ſo abſolutely *prudent*, that it might be truſted with the enormous ſum of five pounds, although it came pouring upon them in a *ſudden* ſhower of gold. Such a ſum *did* I give to ſuch a family, Sir Benjamin, and what

what reaſon have I (more than you yet know) think you, to aſſure myſelf my bounty was well-placed? Why, you ſhall hear. I took out the money juſt after we had been banquetting on ſome excellent potatoes without butter, and as ſoon as I had told the five pounds—guineas, in fact, I ought to ſay—*here* (ſaid I, to a good woman who ſat oppoſite) theſe are to pay you for ſome of the beſt potatoes dreſſed in the niceſt way, and ſerved up in the cleaneſt manner I ever ſaw. As I chucked the caſh acroſs the table, one of the guineas tumbled on a farthing platter and broke it in two. After curteſying, many times too often, and putting the money into her pocket, ſhe gave

the broken plate to her huſband and ſaid—here Robin—a farthing is a farthing, and the good gentleman has —God bleſs him—given us five guineas; that is no reaſon why we ſhould grow more extravagant than uſual, ſo pray, Robin, mend the platter. This, Robin, who was the family mechanick, did in a very little time; and at night it bore the weight of the potatoes, warmed up a ſecond time, as well as ever. I muſt not forget to tell you, though, that ſometimes I have made my paſſage into huts, through all the ſaucineſs and brutality that was ever practiſed, even by the pampered children of *Shenſtone-Green*. I have met fellows that would neither ſuffer me to ſit upon ſtool or chair; who

who have oppoſed my entering into any converſation, and refuſed to give me a cruſt when I affected to be in the miſery which my appearance juſtified. But, having authority in my hand, I always in ſuch caſes, *i. e.* after I found them reprobate—put my hand quietly into my pocket, and then took from my purſe eight or ten guineas under pretence of wanting change: then, having thoroughly opened every mouth with wonder, and ſilenced every tongue with ſhame, I was generous enough to give the ungrateful raſcals a WHISTLE and ſet off for freſh adventures.

Matilda here leaped on Mr. Seabrooke's knee, and kiſſed him with all her heart.

Mr. Elixir (whom I forgot to tell the reader, had come into the room juſt as the tea-kettle was brought) cried, laughed, ſkipped, and bounded at Mr. Seabrooke's relation.

For my own part, I held my tongue and ſpake nothing.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII.

WHEREIN THE TONES OF THE WHISTLER GO THRILLING THROUGH THE HEART.

THUS, continued Mr. Seabrooke, have I *proved* my fellow-creatures before I truſted them.

Would to God, Mr. Seabrooke, I had done the ſame.

Let me ſee, here is my note-book, anſwered Seabrooke, taking a ſheet of paper folded in the form of a memorandum-book, out of which, he read as follows:

" Charges of Mr. Seabrooke dur-
" ing his journey over ſome of the

"Welch mountains performed on "foot."

	£.	s.	d.
Two couples made happy for life with the ſum of	17	14	8
N. B. Three pounds more would have ruined both families.			
To four ſpinners —	0	4	0
To a deaf hedger —	0	15	0
N. B. Found the hedger whiſtling in a ditch at his work: but the ſum made him grave, and ſo he left off whiſtling. The gift ſhould not have exceeded 1s. 6d. which would have made him whiſtle louder than before. This, however,			

was

	£.	s.	d.
was the only extravagance I committed in my whole journey: but, alas! the hedger was at the ale-houſe for three days and nights. I am always partial to WHISTLERS.			
To ſetting up a young man with four ſheep, two hogs, a horſe, a cart and a cow. —	25	0	0
N. B. Very ſober and going to be married to a young woman who has a fortune of twenty guineas. The girl's father refuſed his conſent before, but			

he

	£.	s.	d.
he is now thought a very good match.			
To a woman who was prudent enough to mend her farthing platter juſt *after* ſhe had received five guineas as a preſent. — —	5	5	0
To a traveller who gave me the *largeſt* half of an oaten cake as I ſat by the road ſide, and brought me ſome ſpring water in his hat. —	1	0	0

N. B. All in crown pieces becauſe I wiſhed him to have the *largeſt* money I had about me.

To

	£.	s.	d.
To an odd little man with whom I walked near three miles, becauſe he ſaid he was richer than me, after I had pulled out my purſe and ſhowed him the contents.	1	0	0

N. B. This creature turned out the linings of his pockets and dropped on the ground only two ſix-pences. He ſaid he was always poor when he had money, and rich when he had none; for I drink like a fiſh, ſir, ſaid he, and you have put me as it were into the *mouth of a mug* for at leaſt a week. Yes, yes, continued he, with a good many jokes and ſtories (looking at the guinea) *you* will laſt for a week. But come, ſir, as you did not

not give it me to make a beaſt, I will e'en make a man of myſelf. As he ſaid this we were juſt entering a Welch town, where ſeeing a ſecond-hand ſuit of clothes that hit his fancy hanging at a ſhop, he ſtruck his bargain, and laid out his whole guinea. The firſt prudent thing I ever did in my life, ſir, (ſaid he, tucking the clothes into his bundle) pray God no ill luck may come out, but I have not let you put your money to a bad uſe, which is the caſe but with too many worthy gentlemen, and ſo here I go with my guinea over my ſhoulder and my two ſix-pences in my pocket.

	£.	s.	d.
To a ſtout blade who *triumphantly* compared his hands with mine, and ſwore I had too fair a fiſt to have done much for my livelyhood, alledging, that, it was no wonder I was a beggar, and be curſed to me.	0	10	6
To a little girl, who, as I I ſat on a joint ſtool, darned a hole in my ſtocking, and cut ſmooth the torn corner of my hat *without being aſked.*	0	0	6
To another who amuſed herſelf with making my coat ſtill more ragged and buttonleſs.—A box on the ear.			

To

To a multitude of ſaucy folks who inſulted me divers ways, and who would have ſtarved me when they thought me pennileſs, and gorged me when they perceived I had money A WHISTLE EACH.

Whew—ſaid Mr. Elixir. Oh! Jeſus, how I ſhould like to whiſtle after the manner of Mr. Seabrooke! How monſtrouſly I ſhould like to whiſtle!

CHAP. LIII.

A MORE INTERESTING DISCOVERY THAN COULD BE IMAGINED.

FROM this account Mr. Seabrooke, ſaid I, it appears that, with the ſmall ſum of one year's payment of your penſion—nay, ſcarce the half of it, you have done more rational and more real ſervice to ſociety than poor ſilly Sir Benjamin Beauchamp with all his thouſand pounds, and fair ſhow of *Shenſtonian* houſes and the annuity ſettled upon their inhabitants.

Before

Before any anſwer or remark could be made upon this reflexion, a ſervant opened the door of our apartment, to introduce, under cover of the night (which was then come on) aſſiſted by a diſguiſe, a man who fell at my feet the moment he could reach me.

Sir, ſaid the diſguiſed perſon, I cannot reſt till I have perſonally demanded pardon for the—

Gracious Providence, exclaimed Seabrooke, in the moſt violent emotion—that voice ſhould belong to—

Mr. Danby—cried Matilda.

Danby—anſwered Seabrooke with perfect amazement—yes—it may be ſo—that may perhaps be the name which—

I have taken upon me (ſaid the man) to conceal the faults which diſgraced the family of—

Whom! (cried Seabrooke, ſtaggering againſt the wainſcot) the family of whom?—

Of Sir Matthew Davies, replied the gentleman, unmuffling his face, and diſcovering Mr. Danby.

My *nephew* here, cried Seabrooke, by what accident is he ariſen from the dead?

The dead! ſaid I.

Your nephew! Mr. Seabrooke, demanded Matilda? Your nephew, Mr. Seabrooke, did you ſay?

Call me not Seabrooke any more, madam; I am that unhappy Sir Matthew Davies, who fed and nurſed that *fictitious* Danby upon my knee, when his parents were in their graves; but his extravagant benevolence drove him from my arms to ſome foreign ſhore, where it was afterwards reported he died. Speak, Danvers Davies, am I not relating facts?

They are too true, anſwered the young man; I had committed exceſſes which I deemed impoſſible for you to forgive, and, that I might never be thought of more, determined to abſcond for ever, and feigned myſelf dead.

Since which time, I ſuppoſe, ſaid Sir Matthew, you have been more prudent.

Not

Not a whit, ſir, replied young Davies. This gentleman can tell you that I have been the moſt prodigal, moſt thoughtleſs —

Fie! ſir, ſaid Matilda half drowned in her tears, it's no ſuch thing.

This gentleman's bounty, ſir, found me in the retreat I had ſought to hide myſelf, and he took me under his protection upon the credit of ſome good feelings, and in pity to many weakneſſes. But ſcarce was I put into *Paradiſe* before my unfortunate paſſions—

Lookee, Danvers, anſwered Sir Matthew, that you are a mixture of weeds and flowers I do not want to be told; nor do I deſire to hear the hiſ-

tory of half the mad things you have committed, or by what multiplied ſtratagems you have ſheltered yourſelf from my enquiry, ſince you parted ſix years ago from my houſe, I ſhall only tell you that I have thought about you as ſeldom as my heart would let me, and that now you appear unexpectedly before me, the weak part of my nature is too much melted to do any thing worſe than ſhed over you the tears of pity and affection.

The uncle and nephew were weeping in the neck of each other.

The diſordered and half-dying Matilda ran into her father's arms for that conſolation, which he had not the power to give her.

The

The apothecary threw himſelf acroſs two chairs, and ſobbed with ſorrow and joy.

I felt a mixture of ſenſations, of which, if the reader would wiſh to gain the true idea; it is neceſſary that he has been at ſome period of his life, in the ſame inſtant, inexpreſſibly wretched and inexpreſſibly happy.

It was ſuch a tranſaction as the tender heart would neither ſeek when unoffered, nor reject when it came.

CHAP. LIV.

ESSENTIAL MATTERS.

WHEN it was poſſible to ſpeak again, I related to Sir Matthew all the fair parts of his nephew's character, ſince he came to *Shenſtone-Green*; and obſerved that the other ſide of his picture was only *too bright* to be looked at.

Yes, papa, ſaid Matilda, that is all the fault he has.

And what can be done, poor fool (ſaid Sir Matthew, taking his nephew by the hand) to make it an honeſt lad and

and leſs of a ſimpleton? But, between ourſelves, Sir Benjamin, *your's* was the very worſt ſchool this young fellow could have gone to. He never could help wanderings of the imagination *before*, and here you, and your Mr. *Shenſtone*, bring him to a place where there is nothing but generous chimeras from one end of the village to the other. Why *you*, Sir Benjamin, and my nephew, would, in conjunction, ruin any ſet of people in the world? *Whew*, a thouſand pounds are gone out of your hands to do nothing at all effectually; while I am abſolutely *contriving* to ſpend about an hundred guineas to make the *beſt part* of half a dozen villages perfectly rich and happy. *Whew*—money is a mere

jack o' th' lanthern, in your hands. It is dancing about in a faſcinating manner, and is nothing but a ſparkling vapour, which may bring thoſe who are lighted by it into a hole, after all. But, no matter, I have a cure for all yet. Tremble, nephew, I have a cure for all yet.

During this whole ſcene, young Davies, the nephew, behaved with a contrition ſo ſincere and ſo modeſt, yet ſo perfect a ſenſe of his impropriety that I never ſaw him ſo truly to advantage; and it plainly appeared by every look and action of Matilda, that, with all his errours, he was more beloved by his miſtreſs than ever.

But

But the myſtery of the *travelling* Mr. Seabrooke, who was ſo ſuddenly metamorphoſed into Sir Matthew Davies, the real uncle of the imagined Mr. Danby, ſat ſtill uneaſy on my mind, till Sir Matthew himſelf cleared up the whole extraordinary affair, by firſt writing and then diſcloſing to me the following letter: which was addreſſed to the very friend who had recommended him to me.

To P. PECKHAM, *Esq*;

"DEAR PECKHAM,

"OUR ſtratagem has been ſuc-
"ceſsful as far as has been neceſſary,
"and I have paſſed upon your friend
"Benjamin, as Seabrooke the bank-
"rupt and beggar, till this very day.
"All my curioſity hath been *abun-*
"*dantly* ſatisfied, and (by means of my
"plot) in my own way; but within
"theſe four hours have fallen out two
"very extraordinary revolutions, which
"will not eaſily get from the memory.
"Firſt, I have ſeen that a village
"built upon poetical principles will
"never ſtand the batter of the paſſions,
"which you know blows an hard gale
"from

" from every corner; and, Secondly,
" I ſhall ever have reaſon to bleſs
" the name of the dear chimerical
" SHENSTONE, who hath been the
" means of reſtoring to me that young
" rake of a nephew whom we thought
" dead. By ſome quondam intereſt
" or other he got in his name, or
" rather his name NOMINAL, for the
" penſion; and, it ſeems, he has con-
" tributed very liberally towards bring-
" ing all manner of thoſe miniſters
" upon the *Green*, which are neceſſary
" to create fear and fair-dealing. But
" the boy has a fine ſoul, and I
" believe is ſo thoroughly aſhamed of
" himſelf that he may yet come to
" ſomething. If he does not, I ſhall
" whiſtle him off with a *Whew*. I

" now

"now wiſh you would write an ac-
"count of my affairs in London juſt
"as they *really* are; for the maſk of
"Seabrooke is taken off from this
"moment; and I have ſome maſter-
"ſtrokes to ſtrike in the character of

"Your ever ſincere friend,

"MATTHEW DAVIES.

"*Shenſtone-Folly.*

"P. S. The reports tranſmitted from
"*Shenſtone-Green* to the Manſion-houſe,
"were, in general, ſo different from
"what a theoretic head and heated
"heart might be led to imagine, that
"I have not ſet my foot in the village
"more than four or five times; and
"have, indeed, chiefly led the life
"of a recluſe. Had it not been for

"our

" our patron's daughter—a warm ſun,
" a couple of excellent garden graſs-
" plats, and my conſolitary *whiſtle*, I
" ſhould have dropped my purpoſe
" long ago. Never build a *Shenſtone-*
" *Green*, Peckham. Send me ſome-
" thing to put on. I have ſome of
" the old ſuits ſtill."

Having by order of Sir Matthew, read this epiſtle *aloud*, he deſired Matilda and his nephew to amuſe themſelves in the garden till he ſpoke in private to *me*.

CHAP.

CHAP. LV.

IN THE PARADISE OF SHENSTONE-GREEN, THE WEEDS SHOOT UP APACE.

WHEN theſe young folks were retired—to do which required much aukward and delicate difficulty —Sir Matthew took hold of my hand, and exclaimed aloud—Lookee, Sir Benjamin, I ſee plainly the deſign which your daughter has upon my nephew. The point has been palpable ever ſince I found *out* the young raſcal. But 'tis a match I do not approve, and if you pleaſe I will tell you

you why—However, let them play their little tricks upon one another for the preſent, and in a day or two I will ſettle their love ſtory, I warrant. The firſt matter is, the miſchief which my young rake-ſhame has done in the village; iet us ſee how that matter ſtands.

I was about to reply to all the articles of this peculiar addreſs, when the apothecary cried out, here is worthy Mr. Sarcaſm coming into the court-yard. Now for ſome news; here re-entered Matilda and Sir Matthew's nephew, both bluſhing roſy red.

I have the honour to wait upon you at this time, upon ſundry buſi-

neſſes (ſaid Samuel, as he bowed in his methodical manner to the company). Imprimis, you muſt know that the builders and fitters-up of the ſeveral houſes of amuſement have conſented to take them into their own hands; partly, indeed, becauſe moſt of the penſioners concerned therein have betaken themſelves to flight; and the ſaid builders and co. do intend ſpeedily advertiſing the ſame for SALE BY AUCTION.

And I will be a bidder, cried Sir Matthew. Samuel ſmiled upon the imagined Seabrooke, and went on.

Secondly, there are about thirteen houſes vacated, which naturally drop to

to my honoured maſter, Sir Benjamin Beauchamp.

Excellent, cried Sir Matthew, that is the moſt promiſing news I have heard yet. Thoſe houſes for the future ſhall be more prudently occupied.

Mr. Samuel gave a ſecond look at the ſuppoſed Seabrooke, and proceeded.

Thirdly, Mr. Hackney Oldblade the lame ſoldier (lately preferred by your Honour) in conjunction with Mr. Henry Hewit, and Squire Sidney, have dipped their penſions pretty deep to do an action which ſeemed wiſe in *their* eyes though it ſeemed *otherwiſe* in mine.

To wit, they have paid off certain claims made by the real creditors of the young gentleman, whom, if mine eyes fail me not, ſitteth now by the ſide of that young lady.

My claims, Mr. Sarcaſm, did you ſay, (anſwered young Davies riſing) my claims?

In troth, ſir, rejoined Samuel, they were juſt debts, and would have gone abroad to your diſadvantage, ſo the above gentlemen have bought up your character with the beſt part of their annuities.

Whew, ſaid Sir Matthew, there's for you! Yet do they pretend, that you have ſtill the balance on your ſide—Now how far that is really the caſe is—

Huſh

Huſh—huſh—cried young Davies.

As to that, ſir, continued Samuel, it is fit that every gentleman ſhould have his due, and as you have a ſort of character that cannot be hurt by telling the good with the—the—*the not quite ſo good*, I ſhould humbly conceive—

Huſh I ſay, replied Davies, if you go on, I muſt abſolutely leave the room.

Lord, how ſtrange you are Danby (I ſhould ſay Davies) ſaid Matilda—pray, Mr. Sarcaſm, tell every ſyllable that you know to his advantage, and I will bear you harmleſs.

Pſhaw, cried Sir Matthew, we all know that my nephew has gold amongſt his droſs, ſo drop that ſubject and get on to another Samuel.

The ſteward pricked up his ears at the word nephew, and gave Sir Matthew a third glance before he went on.

In the next place, ſir, ſaid Samuel addreſſing himſelf to me, I have to acquaint your Honour, as in duty bound, of a very long and ill-written petition (that I have received from the *Shenſtonian* mechanicks) which in *ſubſtance* is—for I would not vex your Honour with ſeven ſheets full of nonſenſe—

That,

That, as your Honour has ſuffered *Shenſtone-Green* to be turned upſide down by the whims of the *independent* penſioners, they think you will not object to a very reaſonable propoſition which they have to make, viz.

That you will humbly pleaſe to put them upon a par with thoſe other *Shenſtonians*, who have done nothing for their money; and fix ſome annual ſtipend to each trader independent of the drudgery of buſineſs—labour, they ſay, is no inheritance, and they pretend that in a republick, like that of *Shenſtone-Green*, all ſhould be upon an equality. Not, that they lay particular ſtreſs upon this, your Honour —Not that they will refuſe to ſtick

the knife into the throat of the lamb, nor put the dough into the oven, nor hew the wood, nor fetch the water, any more than when their livelyhood wholly depended upon theſe occupations, but becauſe, ſeeing things take rather a curious turn, they ſuppoſe they have a natural right to join the chorus of that emulation which ſeems to be the grand paſſion of the good people of your Honour's *Green*. Upon this principle—which your Honour will allow is ſtill *poor Human Nature*—they pray for the ſinecure of a penſion or annuity, excluſive of the mere profits of ſelling their commodities; by which indeed it doth already appear, that they cannot get ſo comfortable a ſubſiſtence as might be expected; ſince

ſince the better ſort of penſioners let their accounts with tradeſmen run to a GENTEEL SIZE, and, in the hurry of quitting a *Paradiſe* of which they are *tired*, have, by miſtake, forgotten to ſettle them.

Tradeſmen, ſaid Sir Matthew, have as good a title to take advantage of your incaution as any other people for ought I ſee. What a leſſon for you, Danvers! continued he. What an example! See Danvers the noble pile in ruins! See *Shenſtone-Green* a mere town of the world. See the utility of laws, and weep to think what a wild colt is a man when he but imagines himſelf wholly his own maſter.

Samuel now looked more earneſtly than before, and could not help ſaying jocularly, that the gentleman had, in his opinion, wonderfully improved upon his *Whew*.

Sarcaſm, Sarcaſm, ſaid I, there wanted but this ſtroke of the tradeſmen to finiſh the whole. Putting all things together then Sir Matthew.—

SIR MATTHEW, cried the ſteward!

Putting, I ſay, my dear Sir Matthew, all things together, it is clearly proved, that the only reaſonable addreſs which has been made to my bounty hath come from the penſioners who are now inſtituting the academy of diſpute.

WHEW—ſaid Sir Matthew.

Odſo,

Odſo, anſwered Samuel, I have a card to deliver your Honour from the gentlemen concerned in that matter. Here it is.

" The ſcientific ſociety of *Shenſtonian*
" academicians (who have been indefatigably labouring to ſweeten the
" village by ſome rational and ſolid
" pleaſures) have now brought their
" ſcheme to ſuch perfection that to-
" morrow evening their Athenian en-
" tertainments will be opened on the
" publick, at half paſt ſix o'clock.
" The buſineſs of the firſt night, which
" can only be a ſort of general intro-
" duction, will be for every member
" to ſtate his principles and ſentiments
" upon the nobleſt of all ſubjects—
" namely, that of RELIGION; becauſe as
" our

" our motto is " *Be ye of one Mind*," " it is thought proper only to adopt " ſuch into the ſociety as are ſteady " in their *faith*, and diſtinguiſhed by " their *good works*. This ſociety " being for univerſal good, every " body both in and out of the village " will be admitted, at leaſt for that " night, and every man will have full " liberty to utter his whole heart " whatever be its bias or its prepoſ- " ſeſſion.

" Sir B. Beauchamp and his family " are moſt humbly invited to partake " this attick gratification, which, it is " expected, will reclaim the unhappy " diſturbances lately created, and give " a new form to the village."

CHAP.

CHAP. LVI.

WHICH CARRIES ON THE PLOT TO THE READER'S SATISFACTION.

MR. Elixir and Samuel were ſent away with my compliments to the academicians, letting them know, that I and my party would certainly wait upon them at the time appointed.

When theſe men had left the room, Sir Matthew Davies turned about to his nephew, and, in the preſence of Matilda, ſpoke thus—Lookee, Danvers, I ſee your deſign is to get the affections of that young lady; now I muſt

muſt honeſtly tell you, that I love her myſelf; and though I am ten years, or perhaps fifteen, too old for her, yet I have cheriſhed ſerious thoughts of aſking her to be my wife. Now, this is to give you notice that I ſhall moſt formidably ſtand between you and the accompliſhment of your wiſhes —Nay, I ſhall very ſolemnly be your rival, till by a courſe of rational conduct you have got better arguments on your ſide to ſupplant me than a fair face and the prime of your youth.

Do not think, young gentleman, that ſuch a girl as Matilda is to be thrown away upon a fellow who has already contributed, not a little, to aid her father in ſquandering her na-

tural inheritance. I ſay, don't you think this; for be aſſured—

Dear, ſir, anſwered the beautiful youth with the tears ſhining in his eyes—dear uncle, if you could ſee now into my converted heart—if—

It is too early to make profeſſions, replied Sir Matthew in the ſame commanding tone. I had rather look at your heart than hear your words. I make you a very generous offer. I will ſacrifice my affection to your's when it is clear to the lady's father that you deſerve the preference. That may eaſily *be* Danvers, for you have only to check your vile paſſion for magnificence, and you will be juſt what

what you ought to be for my little play-mate there.

Indeed, Sir Matthew, cried Matilda, running to his knee as uſual, I ſo well know the goodneſs of his heart—that—

Huſh——*Whew*—huſh, huſſey—ſaid the baronet. He knows the conditions. Let him conſider them. So now go and tell him from me, that he is a very handſome fellow, and that though he is my rival, I will neither run him through the body nor blow out his brains.

Here the good heart of Sir Matthew melted as he ſpoke, and he ran into his nephew's arms, begging him for God's

God's ſake to make Matilda amends for having fooled away ſo much of her fortune. I take all this pains with thee, Danvers, ſaid Sir Matthew, tenderly taking his hand, becauſe thee haſt a heart. But I oppreſs thee, poor fellow, go then, go, and let Matilda—What do *you* ſay though to this freedom, Sir Benjamin?

I ſay, Sir Matthew, ſaid I, that we have tortured them enough and cannot do better than leave them together till they recover themſelves.

Aye, replied the baronet, I ſee plainly that you are all in a plot againſt poor Seabrooke. I ſhall be thrown out of my chance, and the

young rogue will run away with his uncle's miſtreſs at laſt.

Sir Matthew gave me his hand, and we went out of the room tenderly admiring and eſteeming one another.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVII.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FOOLS.

AGREEABLE to promiſe we all went at the appointed hour to the Scientifick Society, which was held in the room that had been intended for maſquerading. I was mightily pleaſed at the pomp with which I was ſerenaded from the door to the chair of ſtate, which was emblematically decorated, and on which I was ſeated as Preſident. Every thing was neat, clean and had methought an air truely claſſical. A paper was given

me which contained a list of those gentlemen's names who designed to speak that evening; and as the opening of the entertainment was a kind of present made to the publick, it is easy to conceive what a multitude of people were collected. A person appointed to the office of announcing the business now read aloud (in a tone like the clerk of the papers in a court of justice) the following notice.

"O YES, this is to give notice, "that all philosophers, divines and "moralists, who have any questions "to propose, or subjects to start, "which may tend to the enlargement "of human knowledge, are now de-"sired to propose and start them "freely,

"freely, and ſuch as are deemed wor-
"thy of diſcuſſion ſhall be enrolled by
"the deputy in the repoſitory or regiſ-
"ter of the ſociety for future debate
"and elucidation: this being the
"buſineſs of the preſent evening."

A general hum murmured through the aſſembly after the clerk had whined out this notice, and then a bell rang to inform the audience that ſuch as choſe to ſpeak might begin and addreſs the Preſident. In conſequence of which I was ſpoken to in the following manner, while a man on the left hand ſide was taking his minutes of what paſt.

I am one of thoſe very poor creatures called a man, Mr. Preſident (ſaid the firſt perſon that got upon his legs) I was born without power, knowledge, or inſtinct; I wanted force and cunning to get the nipple of my mother's boſom into my mouth, and without aſſiſtance I muſt have died for want of ſuck, though the milk was full in my view. I grew higher and ſtronger till I was twenty-two years old, and I got into my head new ideas every day. At twenty-two years old, my reaſon became ſo ſtrong that I ſet myſelf at work to find out the mechanick power or natural ſtimulus—or what you will—by which I was able to gather ſo many ideas and ſo much ſtrength of body? Thirty years have been

been paſſed, Mr. Preſident, in this important ſtudy, and I am as ignorant upon the ſubject as if I were yet in my ſwathing clothes. I beg, therefore, this matter may be regiſtered for the future conſideration of this learned ſociety.

Regiſtered.

He ſat down and gave place to

PHILOSOPHER THE SECOND.

I ſhall only trouble you with a ſingle ſentence, Mr. Preſident, namely, that I may be informed, when the ſociety have leiſure—What I am? From whence I came—What the duce I came *for*—and what is to become of me when I am not permitted to ſtay here any longer?

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE THIRD.

Pray, Mr. Preſident, let me be informed how it is that I am able to *think?*

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE FOURTH.

I am a philoſopher upon the principle of the profound yet modeſt Mr. Locke, and I ſhould be glad to hear any man, Mr. Preſident, in this aſſembly have the hardy-hood to oppoſe his ſyſtem. *I* ſay, Mr. Preſident, with Mr. Locke, that I have always exiſted, that there are no ſuch innate ideas—that I am free when I am able to act as I think proper—In ſhort, I am a Lockiſt from top to bottom.

Regiſtered.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHER THE FIFTH.

Regiſter me, Mr. Preſident, if you pleaſe as a friend to Spinoſa, and an enemy to every man who can ſupport the futile arguments of Locke.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE SIXTH.

My notion is, Mr. Preſident, that the ſublimeſt ſyſtem in the world is that of the Bramins. I believe, implicitly with them, that this wretched exiſtence is only a death of a few years, which when paſſed, will be exchanged for a glorious ſtate where we ſhall live for ever with the Deity. Mr. Preſident, I beg you will permit me to be regiſtered as a man who

means, tooth and nail, to ſupport the Bramin opinions.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE SEVENTH.

Down with me, Mr. Preſident, as an Hobbiſt or Hobbeſiſt, juſt, ſir, as you chooſe to ſettle the orthography. For I hold, with Mr. Hobbes that, the great law of the world is the law of convention. I hold, that it is perfectly conformable to the law of nature that every man ſhould have a right to take the life of a fellow-creature, becauſe every man has *a right to every thing*.

Regiſtered.

Whew,

Whew, ſaid Sir Matthew—carrying Matilda and his nephew out of the aſſembly.

PHILOSOPHER THE EIGHTH.

Mr. Preſident, I am a follower of Ariſtotle.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOHHER THE NINTH.

It would make me happy, Mr. Preſident, to know, in the courſe of the learned debates which are to be agitated within theſe walls, what are really the philoſophical and metaphyſical import of the following words, which I have ſo very often read about, without being a whit the wiſer—namely—infinity, incomprehenſibility, eternity, plaſtick forms, monades, reaſon,

ſon, inſtinct, ſubſtance, ignorance and wiſdom?

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE TENTH.

My principle, ſir, is above all things, to take care of my parents; never to break my promiſe; to be abſtemious; to doubt, when I am not certain of the propriety of an action; and to be as charitable as my fortune will permit. Let me, therefore, be put down in the liſt as an admirer of Zoroaſter. What are called his ſuperſtitions, Mr. Preſident, I am ready and able to defend. I do not admit that any of his dogmas were erroneous, but I will take upon me to prove that he is ſuperior to every man that went before or ſhall come after him.

Regiſtered.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHER THE ELEVENTH.

Epicurus for my money, Mr. Preſident. I will defend his charming doctrine to the laſt drop of my blood.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE TWELFTH.

Mallebranche is my man, Mr. Preſident, and I will enter the liſt with any gentleman of this ſociety who will attempt to prove that pleaſure is *not* able to make us happy.

Regiſtered.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHER THE THIRTEENTH.

The perſon who ſpoke laſt, Mr. Preſident, will find a powerful antagoniſt in *me*, for I profeſs the principles of Arnauld, and I do, with all the force that is in me, firmly *deny* that pleaſure can make us happy.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE FOURTEENTH.

I deſpiſe pleaſure of all kinds, Mr. Preſident; I have the greateſt contempt for pain; grief has no ſort of influence either upon my ſoul or body: I ſcorn life; I ſcorn death. Inſert me, therefore, as a man who will maintain the ſyſtem of Epictetus, of Cato, and of every other illuſtrious STOICK like myſelf.

Regiſtered.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHER THE FIFTEENTH.

About eight and twenty years ago, Mr. Preſident, I took up a book which lay ſnug in a corner of my uncle Purepuzzle's ſtudy, and I found it contain a religion, which I have ever ſince adopted. The great founder hereof, Mr. Preſident, enjoins, that we ſhould be modeſt and humiliated, that to do no harm is not ſufficient, we muſt do good; he bids us pardon injuries and never forget benefits. To correct to day the faults of yeſterday. To ſtand, as it were, ſentinel over our own hearts. To cultivate every tenderneſs, and curb every paſſion; without pride or pageantry to beſtow, and never to receive but in caſes of the

the laſt neceſſity, and then to accept a favour without ſtooping to meanneſs. I ſtand up then, Mr. Preſident, and I will for the future ſtand up while I have a leg to ſtand *upon*, a warm advocate of Confucius.

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE SIXTEENTH.

I am one, Mr. Preſident, who neither pin my faith upon the old tattered ſleeve of Locke, Spinoſa, Hobbes, Zoroaſter, Epicurus, Mallebranche, Arnauld, Epictetus, or Confucius.

I do not care what theſe ſay the ſnap of my finger; becauſe, ſuperior to all leaders or leading-ſtrings, Mr. Preſident, I am a young fellow who thinks for myſelf. But, alas! I have

hitherto thought to ſo little purpoſe, that I am almoſt as much in the dark as if I had read the two and twenty thouſand million philoſophical books which, I underſtand, have been written to explain what is, perhaps, after all incomprehenſible. The ſubjects, Mr. Preſident, which I want to have treated, are indeed ſuch as fooliſh folks are in general afraid to enter upon; and therefore we have as yet no ſociety which comes up to my idea of an academy of diſpute: I hope *this*, Mr. Preſident, (which is opened upon your *Green* under your ſuffrage) will be ſuch. It is with theſe expectations that I have come from the remoteſt part of Cornwall, to *Shenſtone-Green*, where I will regularly attend

attend the debates of this honourable houſe till my ſoul is ſatisfied. Not, however, Mr. Preſident, to take up more of your time than I perceive is, on the preſent evening, allowed to one perſon, I ſhall briefly direct my hints to the ear of Mr. Deputy that he may inſert them in his treaſury of metaphyſical materials.

FIRST,

Let me be inſtructed how reaſon differs, either externally or internally, from inſtinct, and upon what principle it is that every beaſt of the field hath ſo ſtrong a ſenſe of obedience, gratitude, averſion and ſhame? I would wiſh to know if my dog hath not the faculty of combining and comparing? Does he think always or

does he never think? Does he—in fact, what is the preciſe difference betwixt him and your humble ſervant?

Here a general laugh enſued, produced partly by the droll manner of the preſent ſpeaker, and partly by the ſingularity of his harangue.

SECONDLY,

I deſire it may be debated whether human ſcience is not a very abſurd thing, and whether the wiſdom of the wiſeſt ſage is not fooliſhneſs? I maintain, Mr. Preſident, that it is neither convenient nor neceſſary for man to know much; and I ſuſpect that we are every hour running our noſes againſt matters that are wholly out of our line. Pray, therefore, let

me be told whether knowledge is neceſſary, or whether "ignorance is not bliſs."

You have propoſed queſtions enough, friend, ſaid I, for at leaſt a twelve-month's debate, and I therefore adviſe, that you reſerve the reſt for more leiſure, as it begins to get late.

The philoſopher aſſented, and his queſtions were

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE SEVENTEENTH.

I ſhould be glad to have it proved, Mr. Preſident, at the very next meeting, whether it would not be more politick, more moral, and more to the honour of *Shenſtone-Green* to turn the Academy of Diſpute into an Academy

demy for keeping pigs, ſuckling calves, breeding chickens or for any other uſe equally innocent, rather than ſuffer it to ſtand upon its preſent foundation?

Here a loud laugh burſt from the multitude, and a growl muttered amongſt the metaphyſicians: but the ſpeaker's queſtion appeared to me ſo appoſite that I ordered it to be

Regiſtered.

PHILOSOPHER THE LAST.

Though I perceive, Mr. Preſident, that the book of the deputy is about to be cloſed, I hope you will allow *me*, who am one of your regular penſioners, and who have ſeen all the diſorders of *Shenſtone-Green*, from the

upon his center (while a kind of ſarcaſtic ſmile pervaded a ſet of features naturally keen and rigid) the philoſophical penſioner began.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVIII.

THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF PHILOSOPHERS.

TO avoid giving offence, Mr. Preſident, to any of the worthy and learned gentlemen, who have this evening enriched the Academy with ſtores of religious and metaphyſical hints for future ratiocination, I ſhall not addreſs them with any remarks of my *own*, but ſimply tell them a ſtory which was told to me by *a celebrated French philoſopher*; and which is, doubtleſs, as well known

to the learned *Shenſtonians* as to me. It was found amongſt the poſthumous papers of an ancient Rabbi.

The ſtory runs thus:

"When the moſt powerful, ſaga-
"cious and wiſe Deity had, in ſix
"days, put the finiſhing ſtroke to his
"work—no leſs a performance than
"that of compoſing the world—
"when he had properly arranged the
"heavenly bodies, adjuſted the mu-
"ſick of the ſpheres, and fitted every
"ſtar to its orbit: when the ſecret
"ſprings which moved and regulated
"this ſublime machine were curiouſly
"concealed from the acuteſt exami-
"ner, and when an impenetrable veil
"was thrown over the arcana of na-
"ture;

" ture; it is ſaid, that the great
" author of the whole, in the ineffa-
" bility of his indulgence, amuſed
" himſelf with obſerving the progreſs
" of thoſe ingenious little contrivers
" who call themſelves PHILOSOPHERS.

" To this end, ſays the ſtory, he
" ſummoned all thoſe who, on this
" ſpeck of earth, had diſtinguiſhed
" themſelves as the founders or inven-
" tors of any particular faith: ſophiſts,
" doctors, and all the proud ſons of
" harangue and diſputation were there.
" Scot, Bonaventure, Gaſſendi, Tho-
" mas of Aquin, Deſcartes and every
" other illuſtrious name which hath
" either been truſted to the wing of
" poſterity, or dropped into the vale
" of oblivion.

" They

"They approached the ſtar-in-
"circled throne of the univerſal fa-
"ther, who, conſidering them as they
"really were, ſtooped from his unri-
"valled dignity, and converſed upon
"equal terms.

"Lookee, my friends, let us ſee
"which of you hath the moſt intimate
"acquaintance with the governor of
"nature. Tell me what I am, how I
"am made, and what is my ſecret?
"Tell me by what force or manage-
"ment the comets are ſuſtained; and
"why in that globe upon which you
"once crawled, one ounce of good is,
"by a deſtiny too fatal, mixed up
"with fifty ounces of evil? When
"you have ſettled theſe points, you
"may, if you pleaſe, by way of ſup-

"plement

" plement tell me, who and what you
" yourſelves are. Speak freely.

" It is a day of abſolute liberty.
" Speak to me with the ſame confi-
" dence you have ſpoken and written
" to your fellow-atoms. I am aware
" that prizes have been propoſed by
" way of encouraging you to theſe
" matters. Be it ſo, I will, for once,
" adopt the rule of your academies,
" and give to him who ſhall offer
" the beſt and cleareſt idea, a great
" deal of money, and his ſalvation
" into the bargain.

" He ſaid, the philoſophers ap-
" plauded the propoſal, and friend
" *Thomas* roſe firſt—Thomas who
" always gets ſo well through the

" thick

" thick and thin of an argument, and
" replies to every thing without hav-
" ing a doubt of any thing.

" Thou art, ſaid he, the exiſtence
" and the eſſence, the pure ſubſtance,
" and the ſimple attribute: thou wert
" *in* time, *out* of time, *before* time and
" after time; the beginning, the mid-
" dle, and the end; the great princi-
" ple, and the great effect; thou art
" preſent every where without being
" any where.

" The eternal, at theſe words, ſaid,
" courage noble Thomas, courage, and
" covered the natural *awe* of his coun-
" tenance by a ſmile.

" After ſome little buſtle, *Deſcartes*
" got up—Deſcartes, who was ever in
" ſearch

" ſearch of the whirlwind that he could
" not meet with—whoſe head was, as
" it were, be-powdered with ſubtle
" matter, and who went blundering
" on without even having read ſo
" much as the Evangeliſt.

" Since I am permitted to ſpeak,
" ſaid *Deſcartes*, behold an argument,
" which I take to be uncontrovertible.
" To *be*, it is enough that you are *poſ-*
" *ſible*. With reſpect to your univerſe
" it is a ſtriking thing enough; but,
" whenever you think proper, I will
" make quite another-gueſs-affair
" of it.

" I am able—yes, I Deſcartes, am
" able to form elements, animals,
" light and whirlwinds, out of a
" little

" little piece of matter. Who knows
" the laws of motion ſo well as
" Deſcartes?

" The Deity ſmiled with pity for the
" ſecond time. Then roſe the uncertain
" and heſitating *Gaſſendi*. He tremb-
" lingly propoſed to God his crooked
" atoms, although out of faſhion, and
" decayed; but not venturing to ſay
" any thing of the ſupreme Eſſence,
" he ſtammered out a few more words
" about his crooked atoms and ſat
" down.

" Next ſtepped forth, with meaſured
" pace, a little, long-noſed Jew; poor,
" modeſt, happy, ſatisfied and retired.
" His complexion was pale, his under-
" ſtanding ſubtle—he was more cele-

" brated

" brated than read, and he concealed
" himſelf under the mantle of his maſ-
" ter Deſcartes.

" Pardon me, ſaid he—addreſſing
" himſelf to the throne, and ſpeaking
" very low—pardon me—but I think,
" between ourſelves, that you have no
" exiſtence at all. This, do I believe,
" is proved by my mathematicks.

" Some feeble ſchoolmen, and bad
" criticks have oppoſed me; but you
" are able to judge how far I have
" been in the right. You only are
" able to determine the limits of
" the genius of Spinoſa.

" The ſolid earth and azure heavens
" trembled at theſe words with horror

" and

"and affright. Thomas of Aquin "ſtepped back: all the philoſophers "looked alarmed; but the clement "and good Deity, lamented the "infidelity of Spinoſa, ordered his "poor brain to be cured, and gently "commanded that he ſhould be ex-"cluded from the ſenate of ſcience.

"Spinoſa withdrew under the ſup-"port of a few partizans.

"Our philoſophers, perceiving with "what unbounded indulgence the "Deity deigned to compaſſionate their "extravagances, immediately held out "in oſtentatious pomp an hundred "fair chimeras, and noble efforts of "the human underſtanding. They "ſpoke, diſputed, oppoſed, ſupported,

"cried

" cried and ſhouted all together.
" The heavens and the earth were
" in an uproar.

" Chaos was come again. Thus,
" when to dine with ſome withered
" witch of a woman who erects her
" reputation upon feeding men of
" letters, fifteen or twenty *beaux eſprits*,
" family authors, rhymſters, com-
" pilers, ſong-makers, and tranſlators
" are gathered together, the houſe re-
" echoes with the howlings of the
" hungry rabble, and the wandering
" paſſengers ſtand gaping in the ſtreet.

" And now uproſe with a conſcious
" air, the redoubted *Mallebranche*.
" Speak to the *letter*, ſpeak to the
" *word*, and then I will anſwer, ſaid

" he. In oppoſition to him, *Arnauld*
" ſtarted from his ſeat, and furiouſly
" ſaid, that, the Sovereign Bounty
" created the human race propenſely
" to damn it. *Leibnitz* announced to
" the Turk and the Chriſtian, that
" in his Harmony they would not be
" able to comprehend his meaning,
" that God, the world, and us little
" creeping creatures are nothing with-
" out *Monades*. Every philoſopher
" diſcovered his ſyſtem, and ſported
" his opinion.

" The Deity by no means enraged—
" he is the beſt of fathers—permitted
" his children, without impoſing laws
" too rigid, to amuſe themſelves like
" libertines as they were, with the work

" of his hands. But, as none of them " had anſwered the queſtions quite to " his ſatisfaction, he put off the prize " to another year.

" On the very ſame day, however " (continues the tale) he diſpatched his " AngelGabriel the ambaſſador of peace " —the firm friend of pure hearts, and " the meſſenger of good actions—with " a particular commiſſion down to earth. " Immediately the winged agent took a " flight into twenty provinces, and paid " a viſit to ſaints, popes, princes, car- " dinals, and inquiſitors, moſt of whom " were, in paſt ages, devout perſe- " cutors.

" Gentlemen, ſaid he, the benign " Father of all Mercies, orders you to

" divert yourſelves without oppreſſing
" any other perſon. Be happy your-
" ſelves, but do not make others
" miſerable. He knows very well
" that there are a ſet of pretenders in
" in the world—a kind of literary em-
" pyricks, very wiſe and very pro-
" found—who are, like yourſelves,
" egregrious blockheads. But as they
" have neither the power nor the will
" to do any harm, the good God my
" maſter is too full of compaſſion to
" arm his omnipotence againſt the im-
" becillity of fleſh and blood.

" Becauſe poor atoms, who have a
" glimmering facultyof thinking, think
" wrong, ought they to be roaſted for
" that? Alas! human philoſophy is
" of ſuch a nature that one ſhould
" not

" not too rigidly mark what it doeth
" amiſs. Believe me, the book of a
" metaphyſician is no very dangerous
" matter. As it is born ſo dieth it
" in feebleneſs. The arguments, which
" ye can make uſe of againſt the
" Moſt High, are as arrows ſhot from
" a looſened bow that is pulled by the
" arm of an infant. They muſt
" needs drop ſhort of their mark.
" And when that mark is the glorious
" majeſty of earth and heaven, judge
" how very wretched muſt be your
" moſt aſpiring attempts!

" To talk and to ſcribble is the pri-
" vilege of the thing which hath moſt
" vanity, and the leaſt reaſon to be
" vain.

"Imitate your tender father who "doth nothing but ſmile and for-"give."

Here ends my ſtory, Mr. Preſident, and it is now eaſy to determine whoſe ſyſtem is the beſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIX.

PHILOSOPHY CONTRIBUTETH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF SHENSTONE-GREEN.

THE whole aſſembly was up in arms at this ſtory, at the relation of which I perfectly ſhuddered.

The philoſophers deemed it abſurd.

The wits applauded it as a fine morſel of *fun*.

The auditors, in general, declared it was impious and profane. But the

murmurs of the partizans ſo violently increaſed, that I roſe with indignation from my chair, and darting a look of contempt at the ſtory-teller, went out of the Academy exclaiming, that I neither liked the inſtitution nor the principles on which it was to move; and that they ſhould never meet with my concurrence till they were likely to be conducted more to the honour of my *Village*, my COUNTRY and my GOD.

Notwithſtanding theſe declarations, the diſputants went on with all the vigour and violence of bigotted controverſy; and the paſſion for declaiming grew to ſuch a ſize that it ſeemed to lord it over every other. It was

in

in vain that I combated this with all the little authority I had left myſelf; I argued upon the ſcore of its involving us in religious diſſentions, the fatal effects of which I pathetically pointed out. In reply to this, they inſiſted that it was curtailing a generous liberty, and inflicting upon them a ſcandalous ſervitude, which implied a deſire to tyrannize: and how, ſaid they, can Sir Benjamin Beauchamp pretend to forbid thoſe eſtabliſhments taking place in a free village, which have always flouriſhed in all large and poliſhed cities. To THINK, they ſaid, characterized men much leſs than to give *language* to thought. Speech was, in their opinion, the cardinal diſtinction of humanity, and if *Shenſtone-*

Stone-Green was not, above all other villages or towns upon earth, the propereſt for fair and full debate, they did not conceive rightly the idea of the liberty of Sir Benjamin's ſubjects.

In proportion as I reſiſted, the philoſophers preached up with vehemence the tolerating ſpirit, and when my conſent was by no means to be gained to the contrivance of the Syſtematick Academy, the members publickly told me, that I had no power to repeal an act I had voluntarily made; and that as I had no right to tax the human underſtanding, they ſhould proceed in the inveſtigation of truth, though to get at her temple it might be neceſſary to ſhake the very roof

roof of the Academy with the ſolid powers of a metaphyſical argument.

Thus, obliged to give up the point, the meetings became ſo frequent that the folly ſpread itſelf about till it fairly begirt my unfortunate village like a ſurrounding peſtilence. In a little time all ſorts of religioniſts, ſects, and ſyſtem-mongers crept into a community ſufficiently divided before. Parties were formed and ſuſtained with an animoſity which denoted the moſt inveterate prejudice and hatred of each other: ſome combated for the Epicurean, ſome for the Platonick ſyſtem; and it was no uncommon thing to ſee a number of my people gathered together to obſerve fair fighting,

ing, with tongue and fiſt, betwixt a Stoick and a Sceptick; a Materialiſt and a Roman Catholick, a Bramin and a Spinoſian. The infection preſently ran to Tradeſmen's-Corner, and my mechanicks firſt hurried their work, and then fairly left it, to get to the Academy. Many of them, who had weak heads and ſtrong lungs, were exalted, by the force of ſuch accompliſhments, from hearers to ſpeakers; and by ſuch means, thoſe who were formerly honeſt men, and induſtrious traders—who were, perhaps, raiſed from the hard fall of unavoidable bankruptcy, or ſet up newly in the ſhops I had provided—turned out blind enthuſiaſts, or abſurd religioniſts, each of whom had juſt know-

knowledge as well as juſt religion enough to make them enemies, but not enough to make them friends.

In ſhort, *Shenſtone-Green* was now in an uproar both from civil and religious misfortunes. It was miſerably divided againſt itſelf, and you may be ſure, reader, the total ſubverſion of my little empire was not far off.

The New Paradiſe was fairly Lost.

CHAP.

CHAP. LX.

AGREEABLE EVENTS, AND MUCH INNOCENCE.

DURING theſe abſurdities amongſt the *greater part* of the inhabitants, the better *few* were labouring to compenſate for the diſorders of leſs worthy ſpirits. Affairs ſtood thus:

Sir Matthew Davies was exerting every tender manoeuvre to form his nephew to a regular ſyſtem of moral and ſteady conduct.

Henceforth, my dear Danvers, ſaid the baronet, conſider, that the eſtabliſhed

bliſhed gentleman is too well acquainted with finery to regard it.

As we now tread poetical ground, which is, perhaps, built on the moſt romantick paſſage in the works of William Shenſtone, I will give you a maxim more reaſonable from that author.

"Have an *heart ſuperior*, with *oeconomy ſuitable* to your fortune."

But I have ſaid enough: my nephew, continued Sir Matthew, will be worthy the love of Matilda Beauchamp.

Mr. Sidney and Miſs Elliot were engaged in little bickerings, which did not affect their mutual tenderneſs.

Mr.

Mr. Elixir was perfectly happy in trundling his wife over the *Green* in her gilt go-cart.

Henry Hewit, as he was the beſt, ſo was he the moſt bleſt of men in the arms of his now faithful Fanny.

Hackney Oldblade was bleſſing his good ſtars even for the loſs of his limbs in the field of battle, ſince it was to the wounds there occaſioned, he was indebted for his preſent felicity—Had not I been thus glorioufly mangled, ſaid the veteran, I ſhould never have travelled upon my ſtumps to *Shenſtone-Green*, nor ever have found my daughter.

The generous expences which the above parties had incurred on account

of

of young Davies, were all adjuſted.

In the midſt of theſe circumſtances Mr. Sarcaſm, the ſteward, ſent me the following letter, which not a little diſconcerted me.

To Sir BENJAMIN BEAUCHAMP.

"MY WORTHY MASTER.

"IN very ſorrow of ſoul I ſet me "down at my deſk to tell your Ho- "nour that we muſt needs part. for "the buſineſs of *the Green* does ſo "blacken and thicken that it is too "much for a man in years, who has, "till lately, lived in a land properly "ſecured by wiſe and ſalutary laws.

"Pray, your Honour, think a little "of the life I am leading. There are "more petitions paſs through theſe my "feeble hands than if I were a Lord "Chancellor, and every petitioner, who "does not ſucceed, honours me with "abuſive language. But, waving this "point, there are others which render "mine office at this place inſupporta- "ble, and with which it behoveth your "Honour to be made acquainted.

"*Shenſtone-Green* is, by being built "after a wrong model—your Honour "will pardon me—become the moſt "reprobate and diſagreeable place I "know.

"We are over-run with lawyers, "peace officers, and uſurers, who have

"ſcented

" ſcented their prey even in this once
" ſtill corner of Wales.

" We have no religion, no manners,
" and people are every hour buying an
" ounce of juſtice with a ton of gold.
" Nor do I in troth think your Ho-
" nour has any further occaſion for a
" ſteward in this village, for penſion-
" ers are every day leaving their ſhells
" behind them, *i. e.* vacating your
" Honour's houſes, and thoſe who
" remain imagine their patron to
" have ſo little authority, that it is
" only for the ſake of preſerving ap-
" pearances that they teaze him with
" petitions.

" Theſe truths, ſir, added to the
" great objection I have to babble and

"noiſe, urge me to hope you will
"gently diſmiſs me from a poſt which
"can be no longer held with ſervice
"to your honour, nor credit to

"Your peace-loving

"Faithful humble ſervant,

"SAMUEL SARCASM."

Steward's-Lodge.

On reading this letter to Sir Matthew Davies, he ſaid, he muſt have ſome converſation with Sarcaſm, and begged he might be ſent for.

While theſe orders were giving, an expreſs arrived at the Manſion-houſe for Sir Matthew, who received a ſmall cheſt, and a large packet of Letters. One of theſe, ſaid he, examining

amining the hand, ſo particularly concerns me that I muſt retire to read it.

He withdrew to the next room, beckoning his nephew to follow him.

Matilda and I were alone.

Hang it, papa, ſaid ſhe, this *Shenſtone-Green* is but a poor place after all.

A very poor place, indeed, Matilda.

Lord, Lord, how much better had I been feeding my linnets, nurſing my ſick canary, and driving the kite from my chickens, in Cumberland!

Heigho, Matilda!

And yet, papa, it has its charms too. I am ſure I love this flower that I have got in my hand ten thouſand times better than all the flowers that ever grew in Cumberland.

How long is it, my dear, ſince Sir Matthew's nephew went into the garden and cut with your ſciſſars—

Pſhaw—now you think, papa, that I like the flower upon that account—Now, I proteſt—

But this village, my dear, I declare it is grown deteſtable to me.

Oh! I hate it ſo, papa, I never deſire to ſet my foot in it again.

I thought, Matilda, you ſaid juſt now that it had more charms than—

No; not *Shenſtone-Green*, ſir, I meant this houſe, and that garden, and the wood, and the little bench in the alcove, where there is ſcarce room enough for—for—

Sir Matthew's nephew and you I ſuppoſe, Matilda—Hey!

Lord, papa, your head runs of nothing but Sir Matthew's nephew.

But ſince we are alone Matilda, let me frankly confeſs to you, that I bluſh to think how deep I have plunged my fortune in a fooliſh ſcheme, and injured thereby my dear Matilda. Through my abſurdity, my dear, you will not have near ſo much money as you ought to have had.

Then I ſhall have leſs occaſion for it you know, papa, for Danvers will be a good oeconomiſt—

Danvers, did you ſay, Matilda?—

Yes, papa, and I do aſſure you, he yeſterday declared to me upon his knees—

Upon his knees, Matilda?

Yes, yes, I ſay, he declared upon both his knees, while he put up his dear white hands, thus, and laid his ſweet cheek to my face—

His cheek to your face, Matilda?

—Juſt for all the world as it might be thus—

Lord

Lord, papa, how rough your ſkin is to his—well, and he ſwore that ſince his laſt viſit to the Manſion-houſe, he valued one ſhilling more than ever he did a guinea before.—

Do you indeed, ſaid I, Danvers; I do by my ſoul, replied he, I do by this kiſs.

By this kiſs, Matilda, did you ſay?

Kiſs, papa, why if you had ſeen him kiſs me that time, it was ſo different from every other—

Every *other*, Matilda?

That you never could have forgot it—for the tears fell upon the poor things

things face, and there was ſo much grief about his eyes, and his dear lips turned ſo pale, that I thought we ſhould have both died upon the ſpot.

Then you love him, Matilda, more than ever. To be ſure I do, papa, and is not there good reaſon for it? Is not Danvers quite a tame, gentle creature, and don't he love me with all his ſoul?

But if after all, Matilda, he ſhould gain your affections and then prove faithleſs.

Then, papa, will I be ſo good humoured and ſo faithful, that I will touch his fine heart and win him back again.

You

You are reſolved then to have him, Matilda, at all events.

I would make myſelf very miſerable to pleaſe my father.

Come to your father's arms—your father's heart, Matilda, for you are dearer to me than—

Here, Sir Matthew and his nephew, who were in the next room ruſhed in.

Not dearer, Benjamin, cried Sir Matthew, to you than ſhe is to me, and you are not much more her relation.

Don't ſuppoſe you have a greater ſhare of her than myſelf.

Lookee,

Lookee, nephew, if you do not promiſe me to make it Matilda's *duty* to call me uncle, by this day week, I will leave you and this houſe with a *Whew*.—

Oh! my God, ſaid young Davies, what ſhall I do! Why do my tears refuſe to relieve me in this exceſs of my happineſs!

Suppoſe, Matilda, ſaid I, you and Mr. Davies were to go and court the ſtars this fine evening, as you ſit on the little bench in the alcove where there is ſcarce room for two perſons.

That, papa, ſaid Matilda, ſlyly, would incommode the young gentleman, but as it is your deſire, we ſhould

ſhould take advantage of ſo heavenly a night, it would be rude not to—

Well ſaid, hypocrite (cried Sir Matthew, as Matilda was going out) you will ſpoil my nephew, I doubt, at laſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXI.

A PROPOSAL FOR THE NEW-MODELLING OF SHENSTONE-GREEN.

BY this time entered Mr. Samuel Sarcaſm in obedience to the ſummons.

And ſo, Mr. Samuel, ſaid Sir Matthew, you would wiſh to quit the *Green?*

Your Honours both know my reaſons, replied the ſteward.

To tell you the truth, my friend, ſaid Sir Matthew, I am as tired of it

as

as yourſelf, and I think I may anſwer for Sir Benjamin into the bargain. Say the truth, Sir Benjamin, is not your frolick over? Are you not convinced that Maſter Shenſtone and you have only ſtarted a project, whoſe execution hath "furniſhed inconveniencies proper only for a lively novel."

I am indeed, ſaid I, groaning forth my profound conviction.

That being the caſe, anſwered Sir Matthew, ſuppoſe we make the beſt of a bad neceſſity, and turn as much as poſſible our misfortune to advantage.

Surely, ſaid I.

Putting

Putting up, therefore, with the loſs of the ſeveral irrecoverable penſions, and the ſums that have been jerked away upon other ſubjects equally uſeleſs, I have a plan to ſettle every thing elſe on a decent footing.

Heavens, ſaid I, what plan is that?

FIRST,

Let your traders live here as in any other town, continuing to work and ſell to the beſt advantage they can. If they are rich enough to cock-fight, let them cock-fight; but, at all events, let them pay a trifling yearly rent to you for their houſes, which, if they chooſe to *quit*,

ſo

ſo much the better; then you may get better tenants; if they like to ſtay, ſo be it. They will know the conditions: if they are inſolent compel them into civility by law.

And muſt *Shenſtone-Green* come to this? ſaid I.

It muſt come to this or worſe, replied Sir Matthew.

In troth, your Honour whiſtles my tune to a T, cried Samuel, ſmiling.

SECONDLY,

Let you, I, and Samuel, continued Sir Matthew, buy, if it is to be done cheaply, all the publick buildings which ſtand upon your ground, Sir Benjamin, and let us convert them into the following uſes: viz.

The Concert-Room into a Charity-Houſe for poor Welch orphans, to be educated and clothed at our expence till the age of twelve years.

The Pantheon, into a Free-School for boys.

The Theatre into an Alms-Houſe for all old people paſt labour.

Humph! cried Samuel, a little coſtively, this note does not ſuit my organs, your Honour, quite ſo well as the laſt.

THIRDLY,

Let ſuch penſioners houſes as are vacated be let to any body who chooſes to hire them, and *Shenſtone-Green* is become too popular not to attract inha-

inhabitants. The profits of theſe may go towards the maintenance of the charities. It would be well to cultivate commerce and invite all people to ſettle in this village, which may be eaſily done if the grand articles of life come cheap to them at firſt ſetting out.

Samuel ſhook his head.

FOURTHLY,

Let matters, ſaid Sir Matthew, go on juſt as they will, do you take care, Sir Benjamin, to be paid for every thing that is claimable; and I charge you to let the laws take their courſe for the future from one corner of *Shenſtone-Green* to the other.

But how, Sir Matthew, ſaid I, are all theſe things to be done. I have

laid out already an immenſe ſum of money, and muſt continue to pay off thoſe curſed annuities.

Read that letter then, anſwered Sir Matthew.

To Sir MATTHEW DAVIES.

" MY DEAR SIR MATTHEW,

" Your wandering whim has not " injured your fortunes, for I con- " ſidered your intereſt as mine, and " have looked vigilantly after every " thing that belonged to Sir Matthew " Davies, while he was humourouſly " vagabonding it as Mr. Seabrooke. " Your immenſe adventures which you " hazarded abroad are returned ſafe, " with ſuch cargoes and freights as muſt " ſwell your large fortune into almoſt " an immenſity. The ſucceſs of a cer-

" tain baronet, who traded to the
" Indian ſhores, is this very day blazing
" in the papers, ſo that your preſence
" becomes neceſſary, as, indeed,
" nothing effectual can be done with-
" out you. It is well your travelling
" name is no longer neceſſary, for it
" is ſo proper for you to come to
" town, and aſſume your real ſelf,
" that had *Shenſtone-Green* been really
" a paradiſe inſtead of a mere mortal
" village, built with mens hands, and
" polluted by mens vices, you could
" not conſiſtently have delayed your
" departure. Your captains will all
" want you in ten days, which muſt
" be the very longeſt date of your
" abſence from London.

" Your old friend,
" P. PECKHAM."

I congratulated Sir Matthew on his acquiſitions.

You ſee, replied he, that money cannot be wanting, and I am determined us three will get this town again into our own hands, or elſe we will contrive to make thoſe pay handſomely who ſtay in it.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXII.

THE PROPOSAL ACCEPTED.

I HOLD *that*, reader, to be a villainous drawback upon thy pleaſure, which delays, unneceſſarily, the concluding events of an intereſting book. If *this* is not a book to intereſt I have diſappointed myſelf: If it is, thou wilt doubtleſs think it the more ſo for conducting thee haſtily through the ſtops and demurs with which authors are too apt to block up their cataſtrophe. For my part, I ſhall lead thee, by the neareſt way, to thoſe things thou wanteſt moſt to know.

Underſtand, therefore, that the plan of Sir Matthew, was, with the amendments of Mr. Samuel, put into execution without delay.

The traders were obliged to ſubmit and *Shenſtone-Green* ſhrunk down to a village, *as villages go.*

Not worſe nor better; not any longer romantick, but real.

The charities were all inſtituted, and all that part of Wales, you will naturally believe, was the better for them.

Samuel Sarcaſm remained ſtill the ſteward but upon a very different principle.

He is to let the premiſes to the beſt advantage.

Shouldeſt

Shouldeſt *thou*, reader, chooſe to become a tenant, it is only neceſſary for thee to take a journey into Glamorganſhire, and make the beſt bargain thou art able with my old friend Samuel.

In that thou art an admirer and purchaſer of this book, he will, I doubt not, be the more favourable to thee.

But ſhould mere curioſity lead thee to ſee this celebrated town, thou haſt only to find it out, and gratify thine heart.

Shouldeſt thou be ſo lucky as to hit upon the ſpot, fail not to ſay to thyſelf. Alas, poor SHENSTONE-GREEN! Alas, poor HUMAN NATURE!

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIII.

CONTAINING WHAT YOU MIGHT EXPECT.

I HAVE ſettled all the buſineſs of the laſt chapter while Sir Matthew was dreſſing himſelf for a ceremony which there can be no one ſo ignorant as not to gueſs.

Thou ſeeſt, reader, the whole remaining matters before thee; and, it may be, thou expecteſt a very fine deſcription of ſilks, ſattins, and ſoft ſayings.

How

How wilt thou be miſtaken! for, my good friend, I ſhall only take thee by the hand into the largeſt room of the Manſion-houſe, and preſent thee to Mr. Davies and my Matilda, with Mr. Sidney and his Eliza, each of whom thou mayeſt, ſhould it ſo pleaſe thee, wiſh much joy on their *marriage*. In the middle of the room thou wilt pay thy compliments to Mrs. Elixir, who is ſitting in her chair of ſtate; and to her huſband the apothecary, who is crying very heartily for happineſs. Poſſibly, thou wilt on the other ſide, like to make thy bow—and I deſire thee to make it with reverence—to the gentle Fanny Hewit and her ſpouſe; Sir Matthew Davies will meet thine eye dreſſed for once like

like himſelf, and Samuel Sarcaſm, who is tatling in the corner to Maſter Hackney Oldblade, will not paſs thy attention if thou haſt really any ſerious thoughts of viſiting *Shenſtone-Green*.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIV.

WHICH IS MORE THAN WAS BARGAINED FOR.

THE moral to be adduced from this work, is, clearly, to prove the abſolute chimera of forming any ſociety which is to aſſociate any number of people to enjoy one man's benefaction under the eye of the benefactor. It is impoſſible to introduce reſtricting regulations amongſt men who expect that a favour ſhould be as delicate as it is generous; ſo that no ſuch ſocieties can exiſt without being thrown into diſorder.

The

The benefactor may, indeed, make reſtrictions, but he is, upon the *Shenſtonian* principle, in too nice a ſituation to enforce their practice; thus his lenity will produce evils which he cannot puniſh; and his ſeverity and indulgence are equally dangerous.

It therefore follows, that good order amongſt men can be expected only under the check of governments, where wealth and preferment depend on the induſtry and care of every ſingle individual; where the intereſt of one is deeply involved in that of another; where hope, fear, deſire, and gratification, and all the chain of tumultuous and gentle paſſions are excited by due degrees; ſo that any exceſs in either is not with impunity to infringe the

rights of a neighbour; where few are *overladen with obligation*, but every man ſtruggles for a little, ſo that obligations are pretty equally given and beſtowed; and where, in fine, there is a regular code of laws, which pervades the empire, and provides equably reward and puniſhment to guard the privileges of one man from the violations of another.

THE END.